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ABSTRACT

This Proceedings reports on the Distance Education strand sessions at the NCA 2001 Summer Conference. Distance education in communication (DE-COMM) refers to communication teaching and learning that occurs when faculty and students are separated in time and/or space. This separation is bridged synchronously (live) or asynchronously (other than real time) by various communication media platforms; for example, live 2-way video and audio, live 1-way video and 2-way audio, video presentations, CD-ROM, web-based live and/or delayed, audio tape, text only, etc. Members of the presenting team shared the latest advancements in communication-instruction-at-a-distance including hardware, teaching, and administration. The strand included two presentations actually delivered to NCA headquarters from Ohio. Several presenters teach in the largest satellite-based distance education system of its kind in the United States (Old Dominion University's Teletechnet). Course presenters teach-at-a-distance include: Professional Communication, Communication Methods, New Media Technology, Understanding Mass Communication, and many others. The Proceedings consisted of the following sessions: I. Sharing Best Practices (Overview and Introductions; Overview of Delivery Systems; Overview of Best Instructional Practices; Critical Issues and Problems in Delivery Systems, Instructional Practices, Administrations, and Participant Contributions); II. FAQ's (Questions Asked of Presenters) and Developing Guiding Principles; and III. Refining Guiding Principles and Recommending Action. (Contains 31 references.) (NKA)

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NCA 2001 Summer Conference

"Engaging 21st Century Communication Students"

Proceedings from the Distance Education Strand

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Overview

Distance education in communication (DE-COMM) refers to communication teaching and learning that occurs when faculty and students are separated in time and/or space. This separation is bridged synchronously (live) or asynchronously (other than real time) by various communication media platforms, for example, live two-way video and audio, live one-way video and two-way audio, video presentations, CD-ROM, web-based live and/or delayed, audio tape, text only, and so on.

Members of the presenting team shared the latest advancements in communication-instruction-at-a-distance including hardware, teaching, and administration. The strand included two presentations actually delivered to the NCA headquarters from Ohio (a first for NCA). Presenters brought a wide range of distance-education teaching and administration experiences. Several teach in the largest satellite-based distance education system of its kind in the U. S. (Old Dominion University's Teletechnet). Courses that the presenters teach-at-a-distance included: Professional Communication, Communication Research Methods, New Media Technology, Understanding Mass Communication, and many others.

Session Outline

I. Sharing Best Practices (Friday)

A. Overview and Introductions

Lynn Disbrow, Sinclair Community College

Thom McCain, Ohio State University

Deborah Meltsner, Old Dominion University

Kyle Nicholas, Old Dominion University

Tom Socha, Old Dominion University

Fred Warren, Old Dominion University

B. Overview of Delivery Systems

Kyle Nicholas, Old Dominion University

Thom McCain, Ohio State University

C. Overview of Best Instructional Practices

1. Satellite Systems

Deborah Meltsner, Old Dominion University

Tom Socha, Old Dominion University

2. Interactivity and Beyond

Lynn Disbrow, Sinclair Community College

3. Administration

Fred Warren, Old Dominion University

D. Critical Issues and Problems in Delivery Systems, Instructional Practices,

Administration, and Participant Contributions

II. FAQ's and Developing Guiding Principles (Saturday Morning)

III. Refining Guiding Principles and Recommending Action (Saturday Afternoon)

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FAQ

The following questions were asked of the presenters of this strand during the course of the conference. The questions and responses are grouped by various topics that comprise the area of distance education in communication (DE-COMM).

Management of Interaction in DE-COMM

1. What are some optimal ways to establish student behavioral guidelines for on-line discussion, e-mail, and media use?

In a DE-COMM course syllabus, it is recommended that a section be included which covers "communication guidelines" for the class, Internet etiquette, and advice on using the telephone and fax. Instructors should inform the students of the hours that she/he is available to return email and/or be available to receive phone calls, as well as the postal address where mail can be addressed, along with a FAX number. Students should be encouraged to use civil professional discourse and the instructor should model this as well. Examples should be given where appropriate, such as when to use and not to use CAPITAL letters (often used to indicate shouting).

2. How should instructors handle student interactions, either "live- via satellite, on-line, or in groups?

It is important for DE-COMM instructors to provide information to their students about the various communication media available for interaction and to teach them how to interact in these environments. In the "live" satellite class, it is important to set a side a specified time for questions and answers. A graphic that says "Questions?" is helpful to visually cue students. In the on-line discussion group students should follow professional

"netiquette" and either instructors or course assistants should monitor these discussions to make certain that students are following typical guidelines (e.g., no flaming, etc.).

3. How should instructors manage silence, while adapting appropriately to different learning styles, so that technology is not determining student interaction?

As in all classrooms, silence can be productive or unproductive. Productive silence encourages students to seriously consider questions that are posed as well as consider positions on issues. In a televised DE-COMM environment, participants might feel more tempted to fill the silence. This temptation should be resisted as long as it is felt that the silence is being used to generate thoughtful responses. The pacing of interaction in a televised environment might also feel "faster" and this may leave some students feeling behind. Be sure that the pacing of the course is such that all information is heard and easy to retrieve.

Management of DE-COMM Course Content

1. What are the limitations and possibilities of using a pre-defined course management software package? [Limited access, site license/cost for institution, training/support]?

The two most popular comprehensive courseware packages, WebCT and Blackboard, offer many advantages for instructors who are not familiar with Web technologies. They can be fairly simple to operate and offer some essential components, such as syllabus, grade book and online testing. However, there are a few things to consider when adopting this type of software. First, these are part service and part software. Generally, a university must have a dedicated server hosting Blackboard or WebCT, which can be a considerable expense to the institution. Second, some training is required to work the software and the multiple pages; data files and navigation require frequent maintenance. Those who have built their own Web pages may find these pre-packaged interfaces cumbersome and restrictive. Selecting from a small menu of possibilities limits flexibility, and the nature of the course can be shaped to a large degree by the components of the Web interface. Finally, instructors may have to do a great deal of reformatting previous materials to conform to the preferences of the software (distribution lists, media files, electronic rosters, spreadsheets, etc.)

2. What are some guidelines for preparing visual displays on TV? The web?

The first thing to determine is the bandwidth, or capacity, of the network between the instructor and the student. If the network supports high-speed, multimedia transmission, than instructors can hope to do more with visual displays. If you are not familiar with the rules of visual display, find a basic reference of composition or spend some time analyzing layouts in various media, including magazines and television. Some essentials for Web display (television will be different):

- Keep it simple. Use white (blank) space generously to keep the presentation clear.
- Maximize contrast. Use dark type on light background. Try to avoid using shades of the same color for text and background.
- Minimize effects in slide shows. Even if you have high

bandwidth, these effects can cause delays, large file sizes and other problems if overused.

- Include links. Place links within the slide so students can check for more information on a topic while viewing your presentation.

- Use visual cues. Bold, underline, different color, etc. Avoid a cluttered look by minimizing the amount of information in each component of the presentation (each slide, for example).

- Use san serif fonts. Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, and their equivalents are good.

- Work with jpeg instead of gif files, if possible. Photos and illustrations will be easier to reshape and resize in this format.

- Instructors doing live performance via Web streaming have other issues to address.

- Eye contact (with the camera) is extremely important.

- Dress in solid color clothes that contrast with your skin and the background.

- Allow for long delays in transmission, especially in discussion. What you say may not reach students for up to a minute.

3. What are the key adjustments to make or consider in the move from "web-enhanced" courses to "web-delivered?"

Web–enhanced DE-COMM courses are courses that are augmented with web-materials. In other words, theses courses could still "stand on their own" if the web materials were deleted. Web-delivered DE-COMM courses are self-contained courses that are totally dependant on the web for transmission. Keeping this basic difference in mind, Web-delivered courses must contain clear, easily accessible information about the act of completing the course, all course-related content, assessment activities, and FAQs. One might think of it as completing a "course in a capsule" that will be opened and used without the immediate presence of the instructor.

Legal Concerns in DE-COMM

1. Are faculty/students who use cartoon clip-art breaking

copyright law when using them in Websites? Classroom lectures? Lectures delivered over a closed circuit satellite system?

Some clip art is purchased as part of software; for instance MS PowerPoint includes clipart. Legal status varies for other products. Much clip art is given away via the Web and instructors should look for an explicit declaration when they collect clip art from Web sites. Basic copyright law applies in all these settings, as discussed below.

2. Is a course web site considered an academic setting when it can be accessed universally?

Whether or not a website is considered an academic setting is probably most important in consideration of copyright issues. To date, distance learning has not enjoyed the same fair use exemption to copyright laws as typical classrooms. As a result, DE-COMM directors often proscribe instructors from transmitting copyrighted materials. However, the U.S. Congress is considering a bill that would cover DE transmission of certain copyrighted materials under certain conditions. The Technology, Education and Copyright Harmonization Act of 2001 (SB.487) extends typical fair use exemptions to DE as long as the receiving population is restricted to enrolled students to the "extent possible." The House version (HR 2100) uses similar language. If your Web site can be accessed universally (or at least within the seven percent of human beings with regular Web access) it is not employing some easily available restrictions. Better to password protect your website, or at least the copyrighted materials. Soon, however, DE instructors may be able to transmit via television or streaming media appropriate portions of copyrighted materials without fear of copyright violations.

3. What are intellectual property issues associated with DE-COMM?

Intellectual property is essentially a determination of ownership. Rules for ownership of intellectual property in this regard are not so mysterious, but are often unstated or misunderstood. Each university needs explicit policies concerning intellectual property, including course materials and recorded presentations. The policies should be worked out in negotiations with faculty and explicitly agreed to before an instructor begins creating a DE-COMM course. It is incumbent upon all instructors to familiarize themselves with these policies. Usually, both the instructor and the University will own specific rights to a course. If the course used to generate profit, some type of profit sharing or compensation scheme must be in place. A conflict may occur

when an instructor considers course materials as her own creative expression and a university considers them "work for hire." Generally speaking, those materials created with university tools, expressly for teaching university courses, and housed on university servers come closest to meeting work for hire definitions, and are therefore the property of the institution. In DE-COMM transmission, the concept is pretty much the same. In the absence of explicit contract exceptions, instructors hold no more rights to DE-COMM transmissions than talk show hosts hold on their programs. Both are performances for salary. One interesting exception may be when an instructor presents a substantial portion of her own work, particularly if a publisher owns the copyright to that work.

Evaluation/Assessment in DE-COMM

1. (a) How do course-evaluations change with the move to distance learning?

Administrators must ensure that all DE-COMM students have the opportunity to provide feedback on the effectiveness of not only the material and instructor but also new methods of delivery. No longer static but rather a continual flow of information, the development of new DE-COMM programs has created a sense of "on-demand education" where students can pick and select not only the course they want to take but also its method of delivery. Course evaluations should be made available in formats that students can easily use.

Pre-stamped, anonymous evaluation cards with boxes to check and blank lines for written comments, on-line clickable yes/no response circles and boxes, along with e-mail attachment evaluation forms are just some of the ways that mode of course evaluation will have to change. Not to mention personal comments being delivered through e-mail addresses, along with the utilizing names and phone numbers of University as well as DE staff and administration provided on program homepages and other course material.

(b) Do evaluation forms change?

Evaluation forms continue to convey instructors' skill and knowledge of course material, as well as their ability to deliver such information in an efficient, effective, creative, gender non-biased manner. But the evaluation forms must change to meet the new needs of the administrators to determine if these new modes of delivery are providing the same qualitative programming as the on-campus instruction (not parallel

quantitative programming but programmatically comparable instruction).

(c) Do the results differ from a traditional classroom?

Although empirical research about the system-wide performance of DE-COMM programs, courses, and faculty has yet to emerge, anecdotal information from instructors who have taught DE and DE-COMM courses indicate that for some faculty a marked decrease in students' impressions of the overall perceived effectiveness of DE-COMM courses may occur. Such decreases have been attributed to the steep "technology learning curve" for the DE-COMM student, limited access to computer technology and timely responses from instructors, as well as the availability of useful information resources on-line and at the various sites. In essence, sometimes new and unprepared faculty member may create a course with a poor information infrastructure. Such an infrastructure may cause students to feel isolated from or not apart of a class environment thereby making students more critical and judgmental of their DE-COMM faculty.

Another issue arises when reading the results of the course evaluation. Efforts should be made to distinguish between technology and instruction/faculty complaints. Negative comments about access to assignments or work because of technology issues should not negatively affect faculty members but rather the administrator of the technology or the technology itself.

2. What are some optimal ways of soliciting feedback from students?

Within an asynchronous environments, posting within discussion groups or on announcement boards can motivate either individual students or groups to respond to questions or comments made by the instructor. Similarly group e-mails can be an effective way of soliciting feedback from groups or individuals. Soliciting feedback from students during synchronous instruction is similar to that of regular classroom instruction. Instead of just point to students you just verbally call on students by name and site or just by name.

Philosophical Issues of Distance Education in Communication

1. A criticism of DE is that technology is driving the course.

How can faculty effectively address administrator misconceptions about the possibilities and limitations of distance learning?

For the most part, administrators who have never been instructors are not always aware of the five to ten hours of prep time necessary to produce just 1 hour of regular course instruction. Added to the prep time are: (a) the technology learning curve, (b) monitoring the various modes of faculty/student communication (voice mail, e-mail, discussion groups, announcement boards, phone messages, etc,) and (c) handling the instruction and paper flow of class sizes that are dramatically increasing from the average 25/32 students to the dramatic cyberspace classroom of 125/250 students (can anyone say "essay exam"--NOT!) .

With limitless possibilities in growth, expansion from both class size and spatial venues, it is important for faculty to always raise "administrative concerns" about human limitations of teaching DE courses. Technology is creating new media environments, often electronic, where individual faculty responsibilities are exponentially growing with the addition of each new technology.

There are but so many man hours in a day that a instructor can read papers and reports, respond to the immediate needs of students, monitor voice and e-mail correspondence with students, develop lesson plans, create testing instruments to evaluate knowledge and skill acquisition.

A case in point on how technology can start to change or drive the development of a course material from only the standpoint of copyright concerns. Take for examples, communication courses that use visual and audio recording to help with the comprehension of material as well as to provide modeling and frames of reference. Due to the nature of DE-COMM courses, distribution of these visual and audio recordings, used as supplemental material, may require copyright permission. Such permission may entail additional costs for the operation of DE-COMM programs and affect the bottom line--revenue dollars. So, administrator may suggest or "offer up" ways of not using such expensive recording due their being cost prohibitive for the overall program. And, let's not forget the fair use clause of copyrighted material. DE-COMM classes that incorporate copyrighted material must be modified each and every time--so out of the door goes the concept of a favorite media clip example, if that example is a copyrighted piece of material.

Forgetting for a moment about unrealistic administrator expectations, the human limitations of the faculty evaluating the work of each student and copyright costs, let's talk about

technology breakdown. How do you we conceptually present the course without supplemental aids? The answer is you can but it dramatically changes the overall impact of the lecture. When faculty are expected to utilize technology as a teaching aid, administration should make assurances that such technology is reliable and robust, but for the most part it is not.

2. How is distance education different from a correspondence course? If students take a majority or all of their courses on-line, how do we distinguish ourselves from diploma mills?

Understanding that a correspondence course is a form of distance education is the first hurdle to pass. Correspondence courses can be considered just one tool of distance education. DE involves a moderator/instructor that provides corrective measures and guidance during the learning process. Correspondence courses usually involve students sending assignments and course material as well taking tests to be evaluated by an institution. There might be little "live" instructional support or help from on-campus staff for correspondence students.

Technological/Infrastructure of DE-COMM

1. What are some guidelines for preparing visual displays on TV versus the web?

Visuals should be prepared in the same manner for TV and the Web, as monitor technology mirrors TV-screen technology. Remember the basics of horizontal format, keeping the background dark and the sans-seraph font light, use the center 2/3 of the screen and avoid too much clutter.

2. What recommendations do you have for developing DE-COMM at institutions with less of a commitment that what has been made at Old Dominion University's Teletechnet program?

Each institution of higher education needs to take stock of why they are pursuing DE and/or DE-COMM in the first place. It is these values that will drive the allocation of resources and faculty. Old Dominion University seeks to provide high quality higher education (in contrast to training) through its DE system primarily to place-bound students who otherwise would not be able to complete a university degree. Old Dominion University does also deliver courses to its regional centers of higher learning to make access easier for all. Access is an important value that drives development of DE. Without relying on

technology, it may be possible to send instructors to off-campus locations to teach courses, to partner with local businesses who might help investing in a teleconference site, and so on. It is also possible that developing web-enhanced courses might be a first step to moving into full DE- COMM courses and programs.

3. What types of institutional support are provided to develop distance education courses?

Substantial budget lines need to be allocated for distance education infrastructure if DE-COMM programs and courses are to be of high quality. However the reality is that levels of support will differ widely. In the best possible of worlds, forms of support may include help of course designers, engineers, distance learning specialists, media production staff, as well as computer support staff. Ideally faculty should be trained at least a term before teaching a course about ALL aspects of a university's distance education delivery system.

This includes how to use the various hardware and software, communication technology, and the like.

Pedagogical Concerns in DE-COMM

1. Does DE-COMM privilege different learning styles?

While research is needed to fully answer this question, instructor experience with DE indicates that students who are highly organized visual learners may be at an advantage in the DE experience. Similarly, it appears that more mature students who have developed effective time management skills may be privileged. Since many DE courses are taught in three-hour blocks, students with short attention spans may find the class format more difficult. Students should be encouraged to maximize their verbal participation and regular attendance to help parallel the "live" interaction in non-DE classrooms. Importantly, students need to be informed that DE classes are not "easier" classes

2. What are some of the time considerations I should make about preparing and delivering on-line and distance courses?

Preparation of materials, including the development of a web-site for a DE Class, obtaining necessary copyright clearance for printed documents or videos, organizing any course workbooks and reading lists, creating Power Point presentations, and developing course content all require a significant amount of time. Because there may be deadlines well before the class

begins for some of these items, it is recommended that an instructor begin to prepare for the DE class at least one semester prior to the teaching of the course. If the instructor is teaching via DE for the first time, it is recommended that he/she participate in any training and DE workshops during the semester prior to the teaching experience. There are additional time considerations for communicating with the students via e-mail or voice mail, as well as for the grading of papers/exams on-line, and the transmission of any papers/exams to the students at the distant sites, especially since many DE course enrollments will exceed those of a regular class. It is recommended that one class release time be provided to the instructor of a DE course.

3. It sounds as though more hours are spent supporting the course on-line/distance ed than a classroom course? Is this true?

As stated in the previous response, there typically will be more preparation/organization time needed for the successful execution of a DE-COMM course. And because of the difference in communicating with students, more time each week will be needed to support a positive "classroom atmosphere" and to create a dynamic classroom presentation and discussion.

Privacy/Security/Safety in DE-COMM

1. What about privacy of students in on-line courses?

Legally, a presumptive right to privacy can be held where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists and no compelling social interest overrides the presumption. Every attempt should be made to provide privacy for online students comparable to what they enjoy in a traditional classroom setting. Protect grades and private conversations by using password protected Web materials and personal email for conversation. Students should opt in to posting personal information online, including photographs and email addresses. Discussion groups and chat rooms can also be password protected, but students should be explicitly notified that such spaces are public. Posting student work online without consent may violate a reasonable expectation of privacy. Consult students to determine if anonymous posting or posting of partial work may be more desirable.

Student Disabilities/Accommodations in DE-COMM

1. How should we address the needs of communication apprehensive students in distance education courses?

As with all students, care must be taken to include all students. The communication apprehensive student might not feel comfortable contributing in the a live TV course by using a table microphone, but might feel very comfortable emailing questions before a class that they would like to see addressed in class. This works for all class modalities.

That is, for students whose first language may not be English, having them write their questions and submitting them before hand makes sure that they get their questions addressed. As they grow more confident and comfortable with their environment they may eventually use the microphone to ask questions. Technology use can be very useful in assisting students with al kinds of special learning needs who may otherwise have a much more difficult time (e.g., voice synthesis of computers makes hearing and responding to email possible for those who are visually impaired.)

Discipline-Specific Issues in DE-COMM

1. Do you recommend teaching a public speaking course through distance learning?

The consensus seems to be that teaching public speaking through distance learning can be accomplished, but that some specific factors such as class size, videotaping capabilities, and site monitoring deserve consideration.

2. Is "public speaking" really "public speaking" if it is mediated?

Some may argue that if Public Speaking is taught in a mediated format that the speaking becomes "broadcasting". However, defining "public speaking" in such an exclusive manner may be overlooking an important objective of most Public Speaking classes: to present the self extemporaneously and with confidence in a variety of settings. The mediated format should be considered as one of those settings. After all, the instructor of the DE course is presenting the self in a mediated setting, and truly, is involved in public speaking.

3. Any tips in teaching public speaking distance education?

It is recommended that:

(a) a DE-Public Speaking class be limited to 20 students;

(b) each site provide videotaping capabilities;

(c) students at the site deliver their presentations to a "live" audience;

(d) students gain skill in Power Point presentations;

(e) the instructor present student videos to the entire class;

(f) the number of sites be limited to no more than five.

4. When we teach a communication class on-line, does some of what we teach change its nature specifically-does interpersonal or public speaking become more broadcast oriented?

The switch in format should not precipitate a change in orientation. After all, the distance modality is only important to the transmission of the information, not the information itself. The key to effective instruction lies in understanding your modality and using it to encourage "class room-like" interaction and behaviors that will allow your students to achieve the course competencies that you have designed without adapting those competencies themselves to the delivery modality

5. How are public speaking classes offered via distance education? What schools are modeling these courses?

Many institutions now offer Public Speaking courses on line. While many individuals have philosophical problems with the idea of a distance public speaking course, others feel it is a great way to reach an untapped student population. At this point, check with Indiana University/Purdue University Fort Wayne, and George Mason University for successful courses, although there are many more. Most of these courses require students to submit videotapes of their presentations. I have also heard instructors at conferences speak about requiring one or two campus meetings to deliver speeches. Old Dominion University has taught public speaking using two-way video technology to it s regional centers (three).

6. Just as a TV-news anchor is evaluated as inappropriate for job-based appearance, will TV-course instructors be evaluated and retained on the same grounds?

From the onset, many faculty members may think, "there is no way that university courses taught by faculty will be evaluated on such a superficial level." But there appears to be a small debate brewing over the future "look" of DE. From the standpoint of being a visual medium (even though interactive DE in real-time

over television is a relatively new mode of instructional delivery), the screen presence of a faculty member may be subjectively considered by students in their overall assessment of the course. But, more research needs to be done to support exactly if and how this may occur in DE-COMM.

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Guiding Principles and Recommendations

The following Guiding Principles for this topic were developed at the summer conference. They represent the top-ten recommendations of the conferees and planners of this strand topic. They are provided to inform engagement in the praxis of distance education in communication. However, they have not been reviewed and endorsed by NCA. The recommended action items developed were during discussion with the strand presenters, facilitator and session participants.

University/College policies concerning copyright, intellectual property, academic freedom and freedom of speech should be available and communicated to faculty and students.

NCA should adopt a policy recommendation that information on institutional policies regarding copyright, intellectual property, academic freedom and freedom of speech be made available on-line and as part of new faculty orientation.

Universities should take the lead in developing and communicating appropriate policies on copyright, intellectual property, academic freedom and freedom of speech for inclusion in distance and non-distance instructor training and new faculty orientation.

Universities should post these policies on copyright, intellectual property, academic freedom and freedom of speech on-and off-line, and should use plain language and give clarifying examples.

NCA should develop and publicize (to universities, colleges, federal and state agencies) a clearinghouse for distance education communication information and

materials in coordination with CIOS.

NCA should develop recommendations to guide universities' policies/procedures concerning copyright, fair use, faculty load, promotion/tenure, and so on with respect to DE-Comm.

Faculty should use non-copyrighted materials and/or secure copyright permission for materials used in DE-Comm

Instructors should strive for basic understanding of the technologies involved and competence in applications used.

Universities should encourage departments to support the allocation of time and resources for faculty to acquire technology skills and fundamental knowledge of technology systems used for distance learning.

NCA should collect resources and/or develop tutorials on technology competencies and make them available online.

Local academic units should develop information technology learning teams to foster problem-solving and sharing of technology learning resources.

NCA should sponsor programming at its national meeting concerning best practices in DE-Comm and DE-Comm technology use.

Universities should sponsor visits to sites that have model DE-Comm programs.

Faculty should complete a DE-Comm training module, developed by experienced DE-Comm faculty.

Adequate support, including teaching load adjustment, promotion & tenure evaluation, compensation, equipment and training, should be a necessary precondition for allocating faculty and department time to distance learning.

Departments should clearly identify incentives and benefits of distance learning curriculum development, and develop metrics for evaluating the relative weight and importance of distance learning curriculum development.

Individuals should carefully self-assess capabilities, technical skills and work load to evaluate their preparedness for distance learning curriculum development, and develop a plan for acquiring needed skills.

Departments should encourage and reward online research and scholarship.

Universities should involve academic units in purchasing equipment and software, designing learning space, and planning support for a distance-learning environment.

Universities should consider rewarding master distance learning teachers and develop mechanisms to recognize and share this expertise.

NCA should publish a Handbook of DE-Comm that contains data and recommendations concerning the setting of guidelines in these areas.

Quality of teaching, integrity, and academic standards for distance learning should be equivalent to behavior/attitude/expectations in the live classroom.

Training and clear standards and expectations should be provided to remote site staff, and such standards should be incorporated into syllabi and course materials.

Faculty and universities should develop assessment programs to ascertain equivalent learning outcomes for all comparable courses (DE and non-DE).

Distance learning programs must thoroughly prepare students for the distance learning experience, including technological training and awareness of expectations

and responsibilities in the course.

NCA should post model distance learning "prep materials" on its web sites.

Universities should establish technological prerequisites for students to meet before they can enroll in distance learning courses.

NCA should sponsor publication of a student Handbook that specifies recommendations and policies.

University program and course marketing materials should be developed in conjunction with the faculty and staff responsible for implementing the program.

Distance education experiences should all include a reflective component that encourages assessment and evaluation of the mode of delivery.

NCA should work cooperatively with AAHE and the Teaching and Learning with Technology Group to identify and post distance learning assessment instruments.

Departments should set standards for assessment and evaluation of distance learning courses.

An annual survey should be sponsored by NCA of DE Comm and related issues such as Tech Comm Apprehension.

Distance education programs should highlight the leadership of the Communication discipline, including the advance of communication theory and methodology.

NCA should develop and promote a set of principles for efficacious communication in distance learning contexts.

NCA should highlight and distribute disciplinary accomplishments related to distance learning in the areas of media literacy and communication across the

curriculum.

NCA should develop appropriate partnerships to advance issues in DE-COMM

Colleges and universities should take a leading role in defining fair use of mediated communication materials for classroom use.

Institutions should actively collect copyrighted materials as part of a safe harbor collection for distance learning course materials, and be proactive in identifying and communicating trends in copyright law.

NCA should develop a position statement concerning fair use.

Distance learning programs should distinguish themselves based upon subject area, mastery and instructional competence, rather than market strategy or delivery system.

University should develop expectations and principles regarding distance learning and identify a set of criteria by which distance learning initiatives will be supported and evaluated.

Universities should advertise institutional quality and faculty expertise and guard against non-traditional packaging and pricing.

Distance Education programs should be aware of and sensitive to the needs of distance students in their context and environment, including different learning styles and cultural differences.

Universities should assure that DE-Comm courses are ADA compliant

NCA should develop and post research and accumulated experience regarding student learning styles and adapting to cultural differences online.

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